United Nations E/2010/L.13

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
9 July 2010

Original: English

Substantive session of 2010
New York, 28 June-23 July 2010
Agenda item 4
The role of the United Nations system in implementing the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2009 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-President of the Council, Mr. Morten Wetland (Norway), on the basis of informal consultations

The role of the United Nations system in implementing the ministerial declaration on the internationally agreed development goals and commitments in regard to global public health adopted at the high-level segment of the 2009 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration[1] and the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[2]

Recalling also the ministerial declaration[3] adopted at the high-level segment of its 2009 substantive session,

Recalling further its resolutions 2009/28 and 2009/29 of 31 July 2009, adopted at its 2009 coordination segment, as well as other relevant resolutions,

Recognizing the leading role of the World Health Organization as the primary specialized agency for health, including its roles and functions with regard to health policy in accordance with its mandate, and recalling the relevant resolutions adopted by the World Health Assembly,

Recognizing also that everyone has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health,

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[1] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.
[2] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.
[3] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/64/3/Rev.1), chap. III, sect. E, para. 56.

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Recognizing further that global public health, including effective and sustainable health systems, is central to achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals and requires a combination of public health policies and other intersectoral actions, including gender equality, education, nutrition, safe drinking water, hygiene, sanitation, sustainable urbanization and rural development,

Recognizing that the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, are interlinked, and expressing its concern that progress on achieving some of them is lagging, and reiterating its commitment to continuing to reinvigorate and strengthen the global partnership for development as a vital element for achieving these goals, in particular the health-related goals,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the theme of the coordination segment: Implementing the internationally agreed development goals and commitments in regard to global public health;[4]

2. *Welcomes* the increasing focus on advancing maternal and child health, in particular newborn health, and recognizes that coordination of strategies between different health services and programmes across the continuum of care, based on the values and principles of primary health care, in particular equity, solidarity, social justice, universal access to services, multisectoral actions, transparency, accountability, community participation and empowerment, enhances maternal and child health, in particular newborn health, and strengthens the overall robustness of health systems;

3. *Stresses* the importance of strengthening health systems and improving coordinated health-care service delivery as they relate to the Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goals 4, 5 and 6, and invites the General Assembly to take this into consideration in the context of the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, to be held in September 2010, building on the 2009 ministerial declaration;[3]

4. *Takes note* of the Social Protection Floor Initiative of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, led by the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization;

5. *Welcomes* the adoption by the sixty-third World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, and also welcomes its contributions to bilateral, national, regional and international responses to the challenges of health personnel migration and the strengthening of health systems and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

6. *Urges* the World Health Organization and other relevant entities of the United Nations system to continue to assist countries in adopting multisectoral approaches in relation to health issues, as appropriate, and to support country-led efforts to integrate health into national sectoral policies in such areas as agriculture, the environment, transport, trade, taxation, education, gender equality, social planning and development, urban planning, mass media and food and pharmaceutical production;

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[4] E/2010/85.

7. *Requests* relevant entities of the United Nations system to support efforts by Member States to strengthen health systems in delivering equitable health outcomes, including through the promotion of:

(a) Additional and/or sustained investments to strengthen health infrastructure, training and retention policies for a skilled workforce, the procurement and distribution of medicines, vaccines, medical products and technologies, service delivery and information systems, especially at the primary-health-care level;

(b) An enabling environment for the achievement of universal access to health and health-care services based on equitable and sustainable systems of financing, and extended social protection, in particular for the poor and people in vulnerable situations, with adequate attention paid to preventive health and health-care services;

(c) Improved governance and high-quality leadership, including at the local and community levels;

(d) Fiscal and administrative devolution, as appropriate, in order to improve governance, performance and accountability in the health sector;

(e) Decent work, including decent working conditions for health workers, which are essential in order to improve the quality of and access to health services;

(f) Appropriate incentive policies for the training, recruitment and retention of health workers in order to increase universal access to health services, including in remote and rural areas, avert a global shortage and an imbalance in the distribution of health workers, in particular a shortage of such workers in Africa, stressing the challenges facing developing countries in this regard;

(g) Strengthened epidemiological surveillance and health information management systems and coordinated communication in order to increase health emergency preparedness;

(h) A strengthened role for civil society and the private sector in national processes and integrated delivery systems, where appropriate, in order to further escalate efforts;

(i) The strengthened sharing of experience, best practices and lessons learned among Member States, at the regional, intraregional and subregional levels, on policy options, strategies and initiatives in support of public health;

(j) Improved coordination of international cooperation efforts at the country level with national Governments, through such initiatives as the International Health Partnership, designed to provide a framework within which development partners can mobilize more effectively behind robust, more cost-effective and inclusive national health plans, and more flexible and predictable resources;

8. *Invites* the United Nations system to place gender equality at the centre of the response to global health goals with a view to increasing the impact of health policies and maximizing the quality of services, in particular for the poor and people living in vulnerable situations;

9. *Reaffirms* that gender equality and the empowerment of women cannot be achieved without promoting and protecting the right of women to enjoy the

highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health, and encourages the United Nations system to assist Member States in meeting their commitments in this regard, including the commitments relating to sexual and reproductive health, and in promoting and protecting all human rights in this context, and to promote universal access to reproductive health, including integrating family planning, sexual health and health-care services in national strategies and programmes;

10. *Invites* the World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS to make special efforts to invest in family planning and maternal and child health, in particular newborn health, building on ongoing efforts of the relevant United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, including the 2009 Global Consensus on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, and the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund;

11. *Requests* the United Nations system to continue coordinated action to respond to communicable diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, as prioritized by the Millennium Development Goals, including through the Secretariat and co-sponsors of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, as well as to increase action to respond to those diseases, which contribute significantly to child mortality;

12. *Encourages* all relevant funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to join in the fight against non-communicable diseases, which threaten socio-economic development and present overwhelming challenges to national health systems, including through the World Health Organization Global Non-communicable Disease Network (NCDnet), and to promote coordinated United Nations system-wide support for low- and middle-income countries in combating those diseases;

13. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to support strategies to address the impact that working conditions can have on health status, health equity and general well-being and to improve employment and working conditions at the global, national and local levels, in particular to reduce exposure to work-related physical and psychosocial hazards, in order to help to reduce the negative health effects of the environment in which people work;

14. *Invites* the United Nations system to support and participate in, as appropriate, the activities being envisaged for the implementation of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/255;

15. *Encourages* the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, as appropriate within their respective mandates, to further develop and draw maximum benefit from partnerships with a wide range of relevant actors, including the private sector and civil society, and to continue to foster relations with global health partnerships, such as the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the GAVI Alliance and the International Drug Purchase Facility, UNITAID, in order to gain from the capacity of those partnerships to mobilize different players;

16. *Calls upon* United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies as appropriate, to intensify their efforts to eliminate hunger and to secure food for all, and reaffirms their need for assured and sustained funding and increased investments to expand and enhance their efforts dedicated to fighting hunger and malnutrition;

17. *Calls upon* the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS to continue to support middle- and low-income countries affected by specific challenges in their fight against HIV/AIDS and to continue the review and optimization of the division of labour among agencies regarding technical cooperation at the country level in order to prevent overlap and thereby promote a more effective response to HIV/AIDS;

18. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to support efforts to fulfil existing official development assistance commitments, including with regard to the health sector, and highlights the need for Member States to ensure that sufficient and increasing equitable domestic resources are programmed for the health sector to achieve better health outcomes;

19. *Welcomes* the various initiatives taken by the international community in support of efforts regarding global public health, and calls upon the United Nations to build on those efforts to promote global public health;

20. *Notes* the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve the health of women and children, including with regard to a joint action plan;

21. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts to develop a health systems funding platform by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the GAVI Alliance and the World Bank, with facilitation from the World Health Organization, and encourages partnerships with Member States, the private sector, civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the utilization of the platform;

22. *Encourages* the efforts of the World Health Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Trade Organization to implement the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property, endorsed by the sixty-second World Health Assembly;

23. *Urges* the United Nations system, in particular the World Intellectual Property Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Health Organization, to support the efforts made by Member States to build national capacity to ensure compliance with their obligations and their right to utilize, to the full, the provisions contained in the World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement),[5] the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health[6] and the decision of the World Trade Organization

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[5] See *Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994* (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994-7).

[6] World Trade Organization, document WT/MIN(01)/DEC/2. Available from http://docsonline.wto.org.

General Council of 30 August 2003 on the implementation of paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health;[7]

24. *Stresses* the need for international cooperation and assistance, in particular external funding, to be more sustainable and predictable, better aligned with national priorities and channelled to recipient countries in ways that strengthen national health systems, underlines the importance of improving the effectiveness of aid, and calls upon the United Nations system to provide support in this regard;

25. *Encourages* the United Nations system to explore new, voluntary and innovative financing models in the health sector as supplementary to, and not a substitute for, traditional sources of finance, and takes into consideration the work and recommendations of the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development, as well as the findings of the High-level Task Force on Innovative International Financing for Health Systems.

[7] See World Trade Organization, document WT/L/540 and Corr.1. Available from http://docsonline.wto.org.